THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) 8495/8496 Bhubaneswar-Rameswaram Express (weekly) *via* Chennai Egmore-Manamadurai has been announced in the Railway Budget 2007-08.

(b) and (c) Gauge conversion of Karaikudi-Manamadurai section is targeted for completion during 2007-08. The necessary efforts are being made to expedite progress of project.

Outsourcing of work

1494. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the areas of work outsourced in the last two years;

(b) what methods were adopted for outsourcing the work; and

(c) how many educated youth were provided employment by outsourcing the above functions alongwith the details thereof, category-wise, General, O.B.C., S.C., and S.T. beneficiaries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Outsourcing of certain non-core activities have been resorted to. Among other, these include:—

1. Ultrasonic Flaw Detection (USFD) testing of rails and welding of rails.
2. Maintenance of Diesel Generators, Water Coolers, Window type AC Plants, roof mounted package units of AC coaches, Static Invertors, UPS.
3. Enroute cleaning of coaches, mechanized cleaning of rakes at depot premises, pest and rodent control, refilling and maintenance of fire extinguishers.
4. Garbage disposal, rag picking, cleaning of toilets.
5. Sale of tickets to a limited extent.

(b) The outsourcing was done mainly through tender/selection procedure as per extant policy.

(c) Such records are not maintained in this Ministry.

Creation of new posts in RPF

†1495. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of increasing incidents of terrorists attacks on trains, there is any proposal to create new posts in Railway Protection Force or make new postings in this regard;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) to what extent, the financial burden would increase due to creation of these posts in the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There is a proposal for creation of 2661 posts in the non-gazetted cadre in RPF. The proposal is pending with Ministry of Finance for ratification.

(c) Rs. 23.98 Crores approximately.

Problems of hawkers in Railways

1496. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently a group of 30 Members of Parliament met him and demanded solution of problems of hawkers in Railways;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a committee has been formed to look into the problems and find out the solutions; and

(c) whether Government are also aware that inspite of above, hawkers are regularly being tortured physically by RPF in Eastern Railway?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Some Members of Parliament have submitted a jointly signed memorandum regarding problems of hawkers in Railways.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Unauthorized hawking/vending in station premises or on trains is illegal and prohibited and constitutes an offence under Section 144 of Indian Railways Act, 1989 and Railways (Second Amendment) Act of 2003. Instructions have been given to Zonal Railways to curb this menace.

No specific complaint has been received so far from any corner regarding atrocities/assault/torture against hawkers by any Railway Protection Force staff.

Accommodation for railway employees

†1497. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that accommodation is not available for 40-50 per cent of employees;

(b) whether the quarters available are very old and dilapidated; and

(c) what is the plan for construction of new quarters for the employees?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.